

Gilbert. I will tell you, and perhaps I can tell you ^{best} by definite example. It seems to me that, while the ^{literary} critic stands of course first, as having the wider range, and larger vision, and nobler material, each of the arts ^{has} a critic, as it were, assigned to it. The actor is a critic of the drama. He shows the poet's work under new conditions, and ^{by} a method special to himself. He takes the written word, and action, gesture, and voice become the media of revelation. The singer or the player on lute and viol is the critic ^{of} music. The etcher of a picture robs the painting of its fair colours, but shows us by the use of a new material its true colour-quality, its tones and values, and the relates of its masses, and so is, in his way, a critic of it, for the Critic is he ^{who} exhibits to us a work of art in a form different from ^{that} of the work itself, and the employment of a new material ^{is} a critical as well as a creative element. Sculpture, too, ^{has} its critic, who may be either the carver of a gem, as he ^{was} in Greek days, or some painter like Mantegna, who sought ^{to} reproduce on canvas the beauty of plastic line and the ^{symphonic} dignity of processional bas-relief. And in the case of all ^{these} creative critics of art it is evident that personality is ^{an} absolute essential for any real interpretation. When Rubinstein ^{plays} to us the *Sonata Appassionato*, of Beethoven, he gives ^{us} not merely Beethoven, but also himself, and so gives us Beethoven absolutely—Beethoven re-interpreted through a rich ^{artistic} nature, and made vivid and wonderful to us by a new ^{and} intense personality. When a great actor plays Shakespeare we have the same experience. His own individuality ^{becomes} a vital part of the interpretation. People sometimes ^{say} that actors give us their own Hamlets, and not Shakespeare's; and this fallacy—for it is a fallacy—is, I regret to say, repeated ^{by} that charming and graceful writer who has lately deserted ^{the} turmoil of literature for the peace of the House of Commons, I mean the author of *Obiter Dicta*. In point of fact, there ^{is} no such thing as Shakespeare's Hamlet. If Hamlet has ^{something} of the definiteness of a work of art, he has also all the ^{obscurity} that belongs to life. There are as many Hamlets as ^{there} are melancholies.

Ernest. As many Hamlets as there are melancholies?

Gilbert. Yes: and as art ^{so} springs from personality, ^{it} is only to personality that it can be revealed, and from ^{the} meeting of the two comes right interpretative criticism.

Ernest. The critic, then, considered as the interpreter, will